Key Terms

accommodation adjustment of a schema by changing a scheme to accommodate new information different from what was already known

adolescence period of development that begins at puberty and ends at early adulthood

adrenarche maturing of the adrenal glands

assimilation adjustment of a schema by adding information similar to what is already known

attachment long-standing connection or bond with others

authoritarian parenting style parents place a high value on conformity and obedience, are often rigid, and express little warmth to the child

authoritative parenting style parents give children reasonable demands and consistent limits, express warmth and affection, and listen to the child's point of view

avoidant attachment characterized by child's unresponsiveness to parent, does not use the parent as a secure base, and does not care if parent leaves

cognitive development domain of lifespan development that examines learning, attention, memory, language, thinking, reasoning, and creativity

cognitive empathy ability to take the perspective of others and to feel concern for others

conception when a sperm fertilizes an egg and forms a zygote

concrete operational stage third stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development; from about 7 to 11 years old, children can think logically about real (concrete) events

conservation idea that even if you change the appearance of something, it is still equal in size, volume, or number as long as nothing is added or removed

continuous development view that development is a cumulative process: gradually improving on existing skills

critical (sensitive) period time during fetal growth when specific parts or organs develop

developmental milestone approximate ages at which children reach specific normative events

discontinuous development view that development takes place in unique stages, which happen at specific times or ages

disorganized attachment characterized by the child's odd behavior when faced with the parent; type of attachment seen most often with kids that are abused

egocentrism preoperational child's difficulty in taking the perspective of others

embryo multi-cellular organism in its early stages of development

emerging adulthood newly defined period of lifespan development from 18 years old to the mid-20s; young people are taking longer to complete college, get a job, get married, and start a family

fine motor skills use of muscles in fingers, toes, and eyes to coordinate small actions

formal operational stage final stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development; from age 11 and up, children are able to deal with abstract ideas and hypothetical situations

gonadarche maturing of the sex glands

gross motor skills use of large muscle groups to control arms and legs for large body movements

hospice service that provides a death with dignity; pain management in a humane and comfortable environment; usually outside of a hospital setting

menarche beginning of menstrual period; around 12–13 years old

mitosis process of cell division

motor skills ability to move our body and manipulate objects

nature genes and biology

newborn reflexes inborn automatic response to a particular form of stimulation that all healthy babies are born with

normative approach study of development using norms, or average ages, when most children reach specific developmental milestones

nurture environment and culture

object permanence idea that even if something is out of sight, it still exists

permissive parenting style parents make few demands and rarely use punishment

physical development domain of lifespan development that examines growth and changes in the body and brain, the senses, motor skills, and health and wellness

placenta structure connected to the uterus that provides nourishment and oxygen to the developing baby

prenatal care medical care during pregnancy that monitors the health of both the mother and the fetus

preoperational stage second stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development; from ages 2 to 7, children learn to use symbols and language but do not understand mental operations and often think illogically

primary sexual characteristics organs specifically needed for reproduction

psychosexual development process proposed by Freud in which pleasure-seeking urges focus on different erogenous zones of the body as humans move through five stages of life

psychosocial development process proposed by Erikson in which social tasks are mastered as humans move through eight stages of life from infancy to adulthood

psychosocial development domain of lifespan development that examines emotions, personality, and social relationships

resistant attachment characterized by the child's tendency to show clingy behavior and rejection of the parent when she attempts to interact with the child

reversibility principle that objects can be changed, but then returned back to their original form or condition

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schema (plural = schemata) concept (mental model) that is used to help us categorize and interpret information

secondary sexual characteristics physical signs of sexual maturation that do not directly involve sex organs

secure attachment characterized by the child using the parent as a secure base from which to explore

secure base parental presence that gives the infant/toddler a sense of safety as he explores his surroundings

sensorimotor stage first stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development; from birth through age 2, a child learns about the world through senses and motor behavior

socioemotional selectivity theory social support/friendships dwindle in number, but remain as close, if not more close than in earlier years

spermarche first male ejaculation

stage of moral reasoning process proposed by Kohlberg; humans move through three stages of moral development

temperament innate traits that influence how one thinks, behaves, and reacts with the environment

teratogen biological, chemical, or physical environmental agent that causes damage to the developing embryo or fetus

uninvolved parenting style parents are indifferent, uninvolved, and sometimes referred to as neglectful; they don't respond to the child's needs and make relatively few demands

zygote structure created when a sperm and egg merge at conception; begins as a single cell and rapidly divides to form the embryo and placenta

Summary

9.1 What Is Lifespan Development?

Lifespan development explores how we change and grow from conception to death. This field of psychology is studied by developmental psychologists. They view development as a lifelong process that can be studied scientifically across three developmental domains: physical, cognitive development, and psychosocial. There are several theories of development that focus on the following issues: whether development is continuous or discontinuous, whether development follows one course or many, and the relative influence of nature versus nurture on development.

9.2 Lifespan Theories

There are many theories regarding how babies and children grow and develop into happy, healthy adults. Sigmund Freud suggested that we pass through a series of psychosexual stages in which our energy is focused on certain erogenous zones on the body. Eric Erikson modified Freud's ideas and suggested a theory of psychosocial development. Erikson said that our social interactions and successful completion of social tasks shape our sense of self. Jean Piaget proposed a theory of cognitive development that explains how children think and reason as they move through various stages. Finally, Lawrence Kohlberg turned his attention to moral development. He said that we pass through three levels of moral thinking that build on our cognitive development.

9.3 Stages of Development

At conception the egg and sperm cell are united to form a zygote, which will begin to divide rapidly. This marks the beginning of the first stage of prenatal development (germinal stage), which lasts about two weeks. Then the zygote implants itself into the lining of the woman's uterus, marking the beginning of the second stage of prenatal development (embryonic stage), which lasts about six weeks. The embryo begins to develop body and organ structures, and the neural tube forms, which will later become the brain and spinal cord. The third phase of prenatal development (fetal stage) begins at 9 weeks and lasts until birth. The body, brain, and organs grow rapidly during this stage. During all stages of pregnancy it is important that the mother receive prenatal care to reduce health risks to herself and to her developing baby.

Newborn infants weigh about 7.5 pounds. Doctors assess a newborn's reflexes, such as the sucking, rooting, and Moro reflexes. Our physical, cognitive, and psychosocial skills grow and change as we move through developmental stages from infancy through late adulthood. Attachment in infancy is a critical component of healthy development. Parenting styles have been found to have an effect on childhood outcomes of well-being. The transition from adolescence to adulthood can be challenging due to the timing of puberty, and due to the extended amount of time spent in emerging adulthood. Although physical decline begins in middle adulthood, cognitive decline does not begin until later. Activities that keep the body and mind active can help maintain good physical and cognitive health as we age. Social supports through family and friends remain important as we age.

9.4 Death and Dying

Death marks the endpoint of our lifespan. There are many ways that we might react when facing death. Kübler-Ross developed a five-stage model of grief as a way to explain this process. Many people facing death choose hospice care, which allows their last days to be spent at home in a comfortable, supportive environment.

Review Questions

1. The view that development is a cumulative process, gradually adding to the same type of skills is known as _____.

a. nature
b. nurture
c. continuous development
d. discontinuous development

2. Developmental psychologists study human growth and development across three domains. Which of the following is *not* one of these domains?

a. cognitive
b. psychological
c. physical
d. psychosocial

3. How is lifespan development defined?

a. The study of how we grow and change from conception to death.
b. The study of how we grow and change in infancy and childhood.
c. The study of physical, cognitive, and psychosocial growth in children.
d. The study of emotions, personality, and social relationships.

4. The idea that even if something is out of sight, it still exists is called _____.

a. egocentrism
b. object permanence
c. conservation
d. reversibility

5. Which theorist proposed that moral thinking proceeds through a series of stages?

a. Sigmund Freud
b. Erik Erikson
c. John Watson
d. Lawrence Kohlberg

6. According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, what is the main task of the adolescent?

a. developing autonomy
b. feeling competent
c. forming an identity

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d. forming intimate relationships

7. Which of the following is the correct order of prenatal development?
a. zygote, fetus, embryo
b. fetus, embryo zygote
c. fetus, zygote, embryo
d. zygote, embryo, fetus

8. The time during fetal growth when specific parts or organs develop is known as _____.
a. critical period
b. mitosis
c. conception
d. pregnancy

9. What begins as a single-cell structure that is created when a sperm and egg merge at conception?
a. embryo
b. fetus
c. zygote
d. infant

10. Using scissors to cut out paper shapes is an example of _____.
a. gross motor skills
b. fine motor skills
c. large motor skills
d. small motor skills

11. The child uses the parent as a base from which to explore her world in which attachment style?
a. secure
b. insecure avoidant
c. insecure ambivalent-resistant
d. disorganized

12. The frontal lobes become fully developed _____.
a. at birth
b. at the beginning of adolescence
c. at the end of adolescence
d. by 25 years old

13. Who created the very first modern hospice?
a. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross
b. Cicely Saunders
c. Florence Wald
d. Florence Nightingale

14. Which of the following is the order of stages in Kübler-Ross's five-stage model of grief?
a. denial, bargaining, anger, depression, acceptance
b. anger, depression, bargaining, acceptance, denial
c. denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance
d. anger, acceptance, denial, depression, bargaining

Critical Thinking Questions

15. Describe the nature versus nurture controversy, and give an example of a trait and how it might be influenced by each?

16. Compare and contrast continuous and discontinuous development.

17. Why should developmental milestones only be used as a general guideline for normal child development?

18. What is the difference between assimilation and accommodation? Provide examples of each.

19. Why was Carol Gilligan critical of Kohlberg's theory of moral development?

20. What is egocentrism? Provide an original example.

21. What are some known teratogens, and what kind of damage can they do to the developing fetus?

22. What is prenatal care and why is it important?

23. Describe what happens in the embryonic stage of development. Describe what happens in the fetal stage of development.

24. What makes a personal quality part of someone's personality?

25. Describe some of the newborn reflexes. How might they promote survival?

26. Compare and contrast the four attachment styles and describe the kinds of childhood outcomes we can expect with each.

27. What is emerging adulthood and what are some factors that have contributed to this new stage of development?

28. Describe the five stages of grief and provide examples of how a person might react in each stage.

29. What is the purpose of hospice care?

Personal Application Questions

30. How are you different today from the person you were at 6 years old? What about at 16 years old? How are you the same as the person you were at those ages?

31. Your 3-year-old daughter is not yet potty trained. Based on what you know about the normative approach, should you be concerned? Why or why not?

32. Explain how you would use your understanding of one of the major developmental theories to deal with each of the difficulties listed below:

a. Your infant daughter puts everything in her mouth, including the dog's food.
b. Your eight-year-old son is failing math; all he cares about is baseball.
c. Your two-year-old daughter refuses to wear the clothes you pick for her every morning, which makes getting dressed a twenty-minute battle.
d. Your sixty-eight-year-old neighbor is chronically depressed and feels she has wasted her life.
e. Your 18-year-old daughter has decided not to go to college. Instead she's moving to Colorado to become a ski instructor.
f. Your 11-year-old son is the class bully.

33. Which parenting style describes how you were raised? Provide an example or two to support your answer.

34. Would you describe your experience of puberty as one of pride or embarrassment? Why?

35. Your best friend is a smoker who just found out she is pregnant. What would you tell her about smoking and pregnancy?

36. Imagine you are a nurse working at a clinic that provides prenatal care for pregnant women. Your patient, Anna, has heard that it's a good idea to play music for her unborn baby, and she wants to know when her baby's hearing will develop. What will you tell her?

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37. Have you ever had to cope with the loss of a loved one? If so, what concepts described in this section provide context that may help you understand your experience and process of grieving?

38. If you were diagnosed with a terminal illness would you choose hospice care or a traditional death in a hospital? Why?

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